

Information about attending child care or kindergarten in Term 4 and starting Prep in 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your cooperation in helping to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This letter includes information about

- When your child can go back to child care and kindergarten
- Schools being ready to welcome children to Prep in 2021
- How to stay healthy and safe.

Returning to child care and kindergarten.

From Monday 5 October.

All children across metropolitan Melbourne and regional and rural Victoria can return to

- Child care (Long Day Care or Family Day Care) and
- Attend sessional kindergarten on-site.

This is part of the Third Step of the Victorian Government Roadmap to opening Victoria.

The steps in the roadmap are dependent on a decrease in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases.

We may need to make changes on the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer.

We understand you may be worried about your child's safety. The advice we have is that child care and kindergarten are safe places with a low risk of coronavirus (COVID-19).

We have been told this by

- the Victorian Chief Health Officer
and
- the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

Changes to on-site attendance at child care and kindergartens were made as part of lock-down rules. These rules were so fewer people were moving around the community.

It was not because child care and kindergartens are unsafe places for children or staff.

Your child care or kindergarten will have a COVIDSafe plan. This includes health and safety measures in place, such as regular cleaning of the room and equipment.

Going to child care or kindergarten is important for all children. They should attend because it is essential for their learning and development. It is particularly important for getting your child ready to start Prep in 2021.

Schools will be ready for children starting Prep in 2021.

Kindergartens and schools are working together to help your family and child to transition to Prep in 2021.

Term 1 at school will be about helping children who were not able to attend four-year-old kindergarten on-site as planned this year.

Schools are doing lots of things to support children to start Prep in 2021, including:

- Online school and classroom tours
- 'Meet the principal' videos
- 'Meet the Prep team' video conferences
- Kindergarten and Prep teacher meetings
- Training Year 5 students to be Prep buddies.

If you have not enrolled your child to start Prep in 2021, we encourage you to look at schools now. It is best to enrol your child as soon as possible. The Department of Education and Training has useful information about starting school on its [website](#).

You should talk to the staff at your child's school about how Prep will look in 2021.

Your child's kindergarten teacher can also help plan your child's transition from kindergarten to school.

Do you need an interpreter?

Ask your kindergarten to organise an interpreter by calling 9280 1955 or visiting this [website](#).

Things you can do to stay healthy and safe

Your child care or kindergarten will help keep your children and your family safe by

- Checking children's temperature when they arrive at the centre or kindergarten each day
- Regularly cleaning the buildings and equipment
- Asking adults to wear face masks
- Encouraging children or parents who feel unwell to stay at home. They will also encourage you to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19).

We also ask that you talk to your family about practising good hygiene at home including

- Washing your hands or use hand sanitiser before coming to child care or kindergarten
- Wearing a face mask any time you leave home, including to child care or kindergarten
- Staying 1.5 metres away from people who do **not** live with you. This includes staff and other families at your child care or kindergarten
- Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or your elbow. Always wash your hands after coughing or sneezing
- Staying at home if you feel sick. If you feel unwell, you should get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19). Staying at home until you feel well again.